

Nebraska Law Review

Volume 49 | Issue 1

Article 2

1969

From the Editors

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Recommended Citation

, *From the Editors*, 49 Neb. L. Rev. 340 (1970)

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nlr/vol49/iss1/2>

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From the Editors

Inasmuch as volume forty-eight witnessed the demise of the "Editor's Page," it is appropriate that its restoration in volume forty-nine take a new form. Perhaps something "meaningful" will be added for the edification of the reader on these and future pages of *From the Editors*, perhaps not. But at least there will have been an attempt to open a more sophisticated line of communication with the reader and to present issues germane to the student, the state, and the practicing attorney.

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A criticism recently leveled at the *Review* is that the Board of Editors seem to totally ignore the practical needs and interests of Nebraska attorneys in the selection and publication of articles. While this criticism may neither be unique nor totally accurate, it is, nevertheless, disturbing. One of the bases upon which the *Nebraska Law Review* was founded was to publish articles of interest to, and place emphasis upon, Nebraska practice. It is primarily with this goal in mind that the Board of Editors for 1969-70 have assumed their respective responsibilities.

To a certain extent, however, perhaps the converse of this criticism is true, at least as it relates to the law school in the aggregate. The retention rate of Law graduates from the University of Nebraska in the state is demonstrative that one of its elemental functions in the past has been to furnish Nebraska with its many needed lawyers. When compared to the two other professional schools of medicine and dentistry, this retention rate assumes considerably greater significance.¹ Yet the college of law remains frozen to the identical situs where construction occurred nearly sixty years ago. The colleges of medicine and dentistry, on the other hand, have

¹ The latest available statistics accurately reflecting the retention rate of graduates in Nebraska show that of the 1,775 on the law school alumni mailing list, 1,352 are residents of this state. These figures reveal that over 80% of the graduates from the College of Law remain in Nebraska to serve this state. The College of Dentistry provided us with figures showing that out of thirty-four graduates in 1967, sixteen have remained. Discounting the ones going into the service, this reduces to approximately 57%. In 1968, only six remained out of a graduating class of thirty-five. Again, discounting the proportionate number going into the service, the retention rate comes out to approximately 35%. The statistics provided by the College of Medicine are even more diverse. As of June, 1969, the total number of graduates from the College of Medicine stood at 4,192. They projected up to the present that only 25% of these graduates remain in Nebraska, based upon their figures, a far cry from the 80%-plus retention rate of the College of Law.

indeed been more fortunate as new facilities in which to train aspiring young doctors and dentists have recently been constructed.

While the physical structure of the college of law is objectionable, its combination with the surroundings of an interstate highway, airport, and railroad system, produce a resulting atmosphere which is deplorable. The environment may be conducive to the study and analysis of various noise sources; it certainly is not conducive to the study of law.

While the University administration assures us that we have "qualitative" problems, our "quantitative" problems lack sufficient severity to warrant University construction of better facilities. This position leaves only two possible conclusions: either the law school is doomed to remain located in its present environment, which may prove harmful to the quality of legal education in Nebraska, or the number of students must be drastically increased to develop the "quantitative" problems sufficient to merit new facilities, which may prove harmful to the quality of the profession generally. Indeed, such an occurrence may be extremely close to reality.²

There are two alternatives, however. Through lobbying, a sufficient amount of pressure could be applied in the Unicameral to incorporate a new law school into a legal-educational complex housing both the state library and the Nebraska Supreme Court. In addition to the benefits of combining the two libraries and immensely improving the facilities, it could in all likelihood be accomplished with considerable savings. While this proposal may be more desirable, however, its realization at this point is extremely doubtful. The other alternative is to construct new facilities using funds obtained from private sources, the realization of which, although concededly more expensive, is not far removed from the realm of possibility.

It has been said that the legal profession as it exists in Nebraska is irrelevant to the real problems and needs of our society. The editors are not entirely in agreement with that statement, for it is *through* the practice of law, as it exists, that the needed changes and reforms must come about. However, before the long-range objectives can be obtained, indeed, before they can even be subjected to attack, the short-range goals demand attention. Only if the attorney is well-trained can he hope to contend with the dimen-

² The enrollment figures available for this year show that some one hundred seventy-five freshmen are attending classes, although facilities for the second and third year students are considerably less.

sions of today's problems in our complex society. Only if an institution is sufficiently equipped can it expect to attract top students and faculty to assure that they are well-trained, and maintain its excellent reputation. The educational facilities at the college are in drastic need of improvement. Whether the situation is rectified, and, in turn, whether the practice of law as it exists in Nebraska is "relevant" to the real problems of society depends in large measure upon the reaction and concern of the attorneys in this state to the problems at hand.